/9 cont./

766 the time of other deaths are suppressed, and the eldest maternal uncle takes charge of the burial. Neither the father nor the mother may see the dead child nor assist at the burial, so as to avoid the death of future children.

766 The first-born having died and the burial requirements having been complied with, the mother must submit, if she 881 wishes to prevent the death of her other children, to a special 845 treatment which is practically a repetition of the ceremonies and the regimen to which she was subjected at her initiation on reaching puberty. Apparently it is believed that she did not fully comply on that occasion with the customary rites and prescriptions meant to convert her into an adult woman with all the functions attached to that state. It is to this fault that the Guajiro appears to attribute the death of the first-born.

766 The mother is suspended for three days in a hammock near the ridgepole of the house. She remains there fasting, covered 881 with a cloth so as not to /10/ to be seen. Let down at the end of this interval, she takes some bija /achiote, or seeds of the annatto tree/ as her first food and thin corn mazamorra; a female uterine relative takes care of her, probably more strictly than during her seclusion at puberty, and she stays for five months in an outbuilding adjoining the household or in a room where she cannot be seen except by other women, speaks softly, submits to a nourishing diet, and is deprived of sexual contact with her husband. Also, the process of fattening with the root of hawapi is repeated as well as the use of herbs to delay the reappearance of menstruation. After this seclusion she returns to her husband's side and takes up her marital life.

766 If another child should have the same fate as the first, the usual burial ceremony takes place: a wake is organized, and animals are distributed as in the case of the death of an adult, the animals being supplied by the maternal and paternal grandparents. The tradition norms having been complied with, the dead child is buried in the cemetery of his ancestors. The mother is given special treatment by the professional herbalists,

291 /50 cont./
855 it fits very tightly, facilitates the normal development of her
breasts. Like the boys, the girls wear some wrist ornaments,
301 magic preventatives, and it is not rare for them to wear some
751 necklace with magic objects which have been "made sacred,"
855 to avoid bad influences; nor /is it rare/ that they already have
[304] their ears pierced and occasionally wear earrings, although
this ornament is for grown women. They do not cover the head
302 and usually wear the hair short, as if it had been shaved and
855 the hair was in an advanced state of growing in again. Never-
291 theless, though the garb described is the usual thing, the present-
day girl frequently uses the adult robe /manta/ from the time
she is very small, especially among upper-class mestizos. /51/

III

INITIATION OF YOUNG WOMEN

881 The life of a girl approaching puberty becomes less free in the upper classes, because her maternal relatives apparently then take her into account and endeavor to train her in feminine activities. In the lower classes the same preoccupation is shown, but oriented in another direction, as her labor has already been made use of very early in the family life, since, as we have already stated, they see in her the future adult woman for which reason they discourage her somewhat in her comings and goings into the woods, although it is also true that they show more concern than if they treated her as a child. Furthermore, they start to use blouses, as we described in the previous chapter, and she is told at a convenient time of the biological phenomenon which is to take place in her: menstruation. When the time comes and this shows itself, her first reaction is to inform her mother, or in her absence, the kinswoman with the most authority.

/51 cont./

881 As soon as the menses appear, the head of the girl is closely shaved. She is placed naked but wrapped in a robe /manta/ in a supine position in a hammock which is slung up close to the ridgepole inside the house. Beneath the hammock a cloth is strung so that the girl cannot be seen from below.

In this position and as immobile as possible, she remains for five days (some say for only three), without eating and complying with a series of rules which later will have importance in her adult life. For this reason these rules must be observed by her to the letter, and she must be closely watched and counseled by a kinswoman, generally a maternal aunt, who does not leave her by day or night while she is suspended above, reminding her of what she should do and prohibiting her from doing what is tabooed so that she may not suffer the consequences in her future life.

[208 789] Before being placed in the hammock, the woman who is in charge of her gives her a herb drink to make her vomit a great deal, with the aim that the girl will hurl out, along with the food she took when she was not yet adult, all her infantile psychological characteristics, such as her mischievous and disobedient nature, her imagination, her way of thinking and believing, her /52/ irresponsibility, her incapacity for work, and, moreover, all those characteristic bodily mannerisms of a girl. Beyond this, the mother a kinswoman, or female friend [832] who may have a potent love charm considered of great effectiveness, places it on her neck or, if it is for external application, rubs it on the genital organs, on the breasts, and all over the body as prescribed, because at this particular time it is effective and especially because it is the propitious moment to acquire powers of attracting the opposite sex, qualities she will have to have in adult life to obtain the married happiness for which she is now being prepared.

If these two prescriptions are not complied with or are carried out faultily, the girl, changed into an adult, will be lacking in judgment and common sense in her actions, which

/52 cont./

881 will mean serious troubles for her family, since the noncompliance with social norms will bring the consequences of her illegal behavior on the family group. In addition she will be lacking in responsibility and will perform badly her role as sister, wife, and mother, just the functions for which she is preparing, and these two factors weigh very much in the life of the Guajiro woman as a member of society. The charms properly applied so that they transmit their power will assure her married happiness: She will not find herself exposed to the problems of polygamy, which imply lack of affection and ill-treatment from the man who buys her for his wife, and in this way she will have the longed-for predominance over him and over the co-wives, who in consequence will take a secondary place by the force of her personality.

881 Once inside the hammock she must not move nor change
784 her original position, because it is believed that /should she do so/, on being brought down later, she will have one leg longer than the other. Neither may she scratch any part of her body because that will leave visible scars. This matter is very important as the ceremony of the seclusion transforms her physically from a girl to a woman, wholly bound to the canon of beauty held by her group, an aspect, which like the others will also greatly affect her adult life. One must also
[826 take into account that in La Guajira a physical defect has
578] a powerful influence on the individual and to mention it is equivalent to an insult which will give rise to resentment on the part of the adult and could bring sinister consequences upon the offender.

Neither should the initiate spit on the floor, because by doing so her honor will be slandered in her unmarried life as well as later after marriage, as they would say of her, judging by appearances or through unfounded malevolence, that she had dealings with a man. They will say she is a "madcap" /cabeza-loco/, a nickname they give to a woman of easy virtue and which causes discord between men and women and which will deeply affect her legitimate hopes for marriage.

/53/

881 While the girl is in the hammock, friends and relatives keep arriving in large numbers, announced by the family, es-
292 pecially when welcoming well-to-do people, and then they start preparations for the feast: preparation of beverages and slaughtering of animals. All the consanguineous relatives contribute their share and foregather to join in what is called the chichamaya dance, during which are passed around large quantities of rum for the men, chicha for the women, and meat for all the participants. The guests turn up dressed in their best dress-up clothes: the men with their wide festival belts, their finest robes, their headbands (kiára) with the crest of feathers, or lacking such, hats adorned with feathers. The women /wear/ robes of brilliant colors, plenty of jewelry, very long shawls which hang down their backs nearly to the ground, sandals with
[302] large, brightly colored tassels, and, above all, facial painting, preferably red, very carefully applied. On these occasions they dance through the night, the following morning, and the afternoon, and in this latter part of the day they may hold horse races on which large bets are wagered.

881 When the prescribed number of days are over, during
784 which the girl has not satisfied any of her body needs, not having taken any food during that time, according to what they say, her relatives unsling the hammock in the early hours of dawn and the girl descends, faint with hunger. The first food she receives is a drink of bija /achiote/ dissolved in water. Presently, little by little, they add to her diet thin corn mazamorra without milk or salt, and later a little milk and
[267] meat. She must not, for example, eat any animal udder, because by doing so she would age prematurely and her face would be lined with wrinkles, deep and numerous, like that food.

881 The girl is bathed with four earthen jugs of water which
832 have been previously left exposed to the evening dew, as this gives it a special quality for whitening, which is important for the high appreciation both men and women have for a

/53 cont./

light-colored skin; For this reason, during the period of seclusion the girl is bathed every morning with this water by the woman charged with looking after her. There was some talk of a second bathing at nightfall, but we could find no confirmation of this.

After being lowered, the girl is confined in a room separate from the house, the walls of which are sufficiently thick to prevent her being seen from outside, or, more generally, she is placed in a small room communicating with the house by a small opening so low and narrow that one can only enter it by crawling and which is closed off by a wooden door or a cloth to keep the adolescent from being seen. This room is built or improvised by the male relatives of the girl, who from this moment /54/ may not see her while the seclusion lasts. During all this period she is taken care of by one of her maternal kinswomen who is thoroughly acquainted with this rite of passage, who has the time to spare to devote to this service, who enjoys the full confidence of the family, and possesses all the ideal qualities of an adult woman, so that she may make of the novice someone similar to herself. It is also essential that she should know well the whole corpus of Guajiro culture so as to be able to instruct the initiate in it, especially the aspects relating to marriage and maternity. And, finally, she is required to be well practiced in domestic duties, especially in weaving. However, in these technical matters she may be replaced by, or receive help from, another close female relative in the training of the novice.

This woman bears the responsibility for the diet and medical care of the girl; she must herself prepare the prescribed foods and serve them to her, look after her hygiene, supplying her with a utensil to satisfy her body needs (a wooden box with a little sand), and require of her pupil that she keep her head covered with a kerchief, so that her growing hair may grow very black and shiny, which is of particular importance within their ideal of feminine beauty and also because this hair, as

/54 cont./

881 well as the whole organism of the future woman, must be com-
832 pletely renewed and different from what she had when she was a child and which she leaves behind on suffering the first menstruation, as well as each one of her childish psychic and physical habits.

881 One of the principal preoccupations of the person responsi-
278 ble for the care of the novice is her medication. This medical treatment includes especially the daily and repeated drinking of infusions or juices of certain herbs which are intended to assist her to reach perfection in all that is related to her future life. One of these medicines is the herb called hawapi, which is obtained from the herbsellers of the Sierra de Jarara and Sierra de Macuira, who grind it carefully into a paste which hardens with time. They daily scrape off a small portion of this, which is dissolved in water and given to the girl before her first meal, after the daily bath, at midday, and at sunset. The aim of this is to give the young woman a bodily aspect different from the childish one she had, as by its means she loses her drawn-out lines and her sex is defined by the development of her breasts, of her hips, and all of the adult female form, following the accepted canons of feminine physical beauty: a tall body with broad hips, breasts well developed, erect, solid, and having pronounced curves but firm of flesh. This herb, according to local belief, supplies fat to the essential parts of the body. /55/

Another of the medical attentions is directed to avoiding the return of menstruation during all the time the girl is secluded. If she is well cared for, says the Guajiro woman, it will not reappear; otherwise, however, it will. To obtain this result she has recourse to the empirical and traditional knowledge which she has of plants, and she gives her a series of juices or potions to avoid menstruation. The women say that these medicines influence their married life, as the woman who is well looked after during her seclusion will have easy deliveries, normal pregnancies, healthy children who will grow

/55 cont./

normally, and above all she will not be worn out by too frequent childbearing, since all these remedies in the long run are made use of to avoid the woman's having these cares, so much so that in the case of the very poor girls sterilization or at least a very limited fecundity is hoped for, because they know that they and their offspring will be practically in the hands of the stronger groups who can easily enslave their sons and daughters and nephews and nieces by the arbitrary and exaggerated use of legal institutions.

Even if the girl enters the Capuchin mission and for this reason does not go through with the initiation in her home, and even if her parents, influenced by the missionaries, decide to forego this custom or are prevented by poverty from holding it, she does not forget -- and her companions back her up -- to take the medicines prescribed even though she does not undergo the regimen of seclusion. During a long period of time -- which shows what value she herself sets on her novitiate -- every morning she takes the juice of herbs which she knows of or which are given to her, to avoid menstruation and to obtain the objectives mentioned above. (In order to clarify further of the significance with respect to maternity in the initiation of young women, we refer the reader to the section Death of the First-born, Chap. I, pp. 10 ff.)

The economic aspect which she must learn and which by the perfection and acquisition of new techniques now plays a very important part is that of weaving. The woman during her seclusion improves her knowledge of this trade, which she began to learn during her prepubertal period. This matter has so much importance that in cases where a girl has been abducted and her maternal relatives present their claim for compensation payment, the man can refuse to buy her, alleging she is not able to weave. Furthermore, the woman by weaving earns money for the support of the home which is in her care. She must also supply her kin, including her husband, with guayucos /loincloths/, saddle blankets /pellones/, and other woven necessities.

/55 cont./

Also, she has to acquire full knowledge of domestic duties: how to prepare special dishes as well as the ordinary ones; the norms of hospitality toward her friends and those of her husband, and toward him especially; what in her married life she is allowed to do; the consequences of her conduct in married life; /56/ the problems of polygamy and the way to face them; her role as administrator of the home; feminine life as such; the sexual act; notions on fertility, pregnancy, and prohibitions when in this condition; legal obligations that her husband should comply with; giving birth; diet, etc; her role within the family as intermediary-regulator of relations between her people on the one hand and the husband and his relatives on the other, her co-wives and the children of these if they live a life in common, etc. She likewise learns the past history of her group with all its eminent members and their deeds, its economic position, its status, etc., all of which will show her how to identify herself with them and acquire the affectionate contacts which the consanguineous tie imposes.

A special condition during her seclusion is the isolation of the girl from all the male members of the house and from those who come to visit. She is not allowed to see them or to be visited by them. No man is permitted to enter her room so that it is redundant to state that she is prohibited from all sexual relations. So much is this so that it has occurred (in areas where there is little or no contact with whites, where the poor Indian woman is at the mercy of the abuses of the rich) that girls during their seclusion have been violated by a powerful Indian, and her parents have terminated the seclusion and made the man pay (if they can muster enough backing) for the abuse committed but not for the possible pregnancy, as they do not believe that this will happen if the girl has been properly cared for. If a man should enter her temporary lodging, she is expected to hide herself and not look at him.

Lastly, she must observe the custom of speaking softly to the woman who is caring for her and to her female visitors, and of speaking little and not laughing stridently.

/36 cont./

The duration of the seclusion was longer in past years, longer than at the present time, and there still may be found cases among rich families where this period is extended to five years, but normally among poor families it may last only one month or even less, and in the middle-income group it averages six months to one year.

Once the family in conclave or the mother and the aunts decide to terminate the seclusion, the final feast is given, in which the girl appears and behaves as an adult. She is presented as such, and she is given the opportunity to occupy the place of, and to take part in the activities corresponding to, a marriageable young girl. Frequently at this feast some interested guest may offer to buy her for his wife.

The news of the "coming out" of the young girl is rapidly spread throughout the peninsula. All the friends of the family arrive at the feast, as also the important people of the region, who have been invited beforehand, and, very specially, all the well-to-do marriageable men. If the woman is of estimable qualities and talents, /37/ those who are looking for a wife for the first time attend. The family preparations for such a feast are very complete, according to their status. There is an abundance of drinks for all, men and women, music for dancing, horse racing when they want to give more splendor to the gathering, and slaughtering of animals. The maternal relatives make their donations and meet to help their relatives in the fulfillment of the customary norms of hospitality. The more important visitors are received in the house itself and given preferencial attention, according to their standing. The girl is bathed for the last time at dawn with the traditional earthen jugs of water, and her hair is cut in the fashion, that is to say, leaving it a short, dishevelled mop. This is done by an experienced woman of eminence who can transmit her excellent personal qualities to the girl. The latter carefully keeps her hair in her bag with her intimate personal possessions and later places it under fresh cow dung with the hope that the

/57 cont./

will soon be bought with heads of cattle. This signifies that her value will be high, such as corresponds to a woman of standing. She likewise takes great care that her hair does not fall into strange hands, as it is believed that it might be used by some man who wants to do her harm by making with it a magic charm which would have the quality of causing her to fall in love with him; he on his part would scorn her and abuse her, as she would be left submissive to his will.

After the haircutting she is dressed in the traditional costume of an adult woman and is decked out with the customary jewelry and ornaments in accord with her family rank. She receives this jewelry from her mother, from her maternal aunt, and from her grandmother, and they are placed on her by the woman charged with caring for her or by a well-to-do kinswoman, so that they may never be lost. After this, they apply the facial painting, also for the first time, which, it being a feast day, should be made from red annatta /bija/. Then she makes her appearance at the feast, and she may dance and be courted. At this moment, crucial for her life, she must give signs of adult capabilities, showing evidence of the worth of the years of her novitiate, not only in the physical aspect of her fair skin and dark hair, in her mature figure, in her dress and ornaments, but also in the proper fulfillment of cultural patterns. The relatives carry on the feast as long as they can or think in keeping with their position. Afterward, the woman, ready now for marriage and motherhood, starts to comply with the patterns established in her culture for the adult woman.

Summarizing, we can say that the initiation of young women has the following characteristics: /58/

1. It has the significance of a new birth, preceded by a process of spiritual-physical transformation which converts the girl into an adult woman.

2. It is a system of preparation for adult social life, in the sense that /by its means/ are acquired knowledge of proper cultural patterns.

/58 cont./

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3. It represents a period of apprenticeship during which she acquires mastery of the general techniques of the culture and the specific ones pertaining to her family.

4. From the knowledge obtained from the past history of her consanguineous family group, the initiate is identified with it, giving rise to the reaffirmation of the bonds of union, as an adult member participating in it.

5. It is a period of preparation for the perfect fulfillment of the socio-physical function of motherhood.

6. Lastly, it constitutes a thorough training in the biological and social functions of the woman in carrying out well her role as a wife. /59/

IV

PREMARITAL CONSIDERATIONS

562

Independence of the man. In the Guajiro family organization the man occupies a privileged position which is apparent from his childhood onward.

The father, as we have seen, hopes that his first-born will be a boy, and the maternal family also cheerfully accepts that wish, as it is the male elements that strengthen and give prestige to the family, who defend it in disputes with other groups, and who can help the group forward as a powerful economic factor.

For these reasons Guajiro boys are reared with more freedom and privileges than girls. In the absence of the father, the eldest son, or in any case the male child, takes the father's place in important matters in the home, being consulted by his mother, who respects his opinion, and he occupies his father's place and has his privileges at meals.

[11 cont.]
*756 might dedicate herself to her teaching. The woman shaman called for the purpose recognized at once that our informant had the spirit appropriate to her calling and began the tutelage of the new curer [curandera].

Another woman shaman narrated the first symptoms of her
•[681] vocation in this way. When she had reached the age of reason, that is, about ten or eleven years of age (the time of the initiation for the change from girl to young woman: the beginning of puberty), she felt one day a need to perform a bodily function. She went into the woods to do this, but no matter how much she tried she was unable to do it. This situation repeated itself sev-
[787] eral times. At night she dreamed that a spirit descended and, taking her by the hand, led her to a stream where there was a big field of plantain and ahuyama. At sunrise the next day [12] she woke up depressed and trembling. She heard a voice in her ear
[226] saying, "Eat manilla and macuira (3)." She frequently lost

3. A plant with a leaf similar to that of tobacco.

consciousness and when she came to again was weak and trembling. When she ate what was ordered, the shivering and feeling of illness disappeared as if by enchantment, and she remained in perfect health. She was going to be a shaman. Her mother, who was already one, announced this fact and prepared to begin her training according to the rules.

*756 From the personal statements of these two shamans which
787 we have just reported and from other relative data that we have
171 been able to obtain by word of mouth from other informants, we can deduce the following: 1) The graduations to the rank of shaman (the illumination, we might better call it) are revelations of the wanurú ("spirit of death") which enters the body of certain persons chosen by it, that they may exercise the office of curer magicians. As a proof of the presence of the spirit in new shamans through manifestations of revelation, we may see among the Bororó tribe of Brazil, for example, how the spirit appears in the shape of a monkey or water hog (4), and among the

4. Métraux, Alfred. Le Chamanisme chez les indiens de l'Amérique du Sud Tropicale

[85 cont.]

766 head downward, and then they cover it with a piece of another clay olla, new, usually with a base. The urn is buried in the [824] woods at the foot of a special tree called in Guajiro huruwá ("within us," etymologically), with the idea that the other children that are born will not continue dying. No special ceremony accompanies the burial of the child, which must be carried out by the maternal uncle, since neither the father nor the mother may be present because it is believed that if they should be all their other children would also die as they were born.

765 When the first-born dies, and the work of its burial has been complied with, the mother is put through the following 766 procedure: She is hung in a hammock for three days in a closed room (it is really a small house made especially for the purpose). After three days have passed, she is unslung from the hammock, but she has to continue in seclusion for a further five [834] months (five lunar months), and the husband is prohibited from visiting her, with the idea of avoiding sexual contact. After this seclusion the husband may return, and they resume normal married life. During the time she is in the hammock, the [262] woman is not allowed to receive any food except a medicine called hawapi, which serves for fattening. This medicine is a [278] mixture of scraped roots dissolved in cold water [86] and is drunk after being strained. The wife receives this medicine from her mother, who acts as her nurse.

In other words, the mother, by reason of the death of her [881] first-born, has to repeat the complete cycle of seclusion as at the initiation of young women when they reach puberty. The ceremonial is the same, seclusion, taking of fattening medicine, sexual exclusion of the man, and in general all contact or relations with him, etc.

764 If in spite of these precautions the next child should also die, the previous cycle is not followed, but the baby is buried with all due ceremony. A fiesta is arranged for the burial, a wake is held with the usual distribution of liquor, and animals which the maternal and paternal grandparents supply are sacrificed. The mother undergoes a new special treatment but without those of seclusion.

[95 cont.]

832 Once she has finished her bath, she must hang up her dress over her hammock to dry, also inside the house. It is also necessary for her to apply achiote powder to certain parts of her body, such as under her arms, on her breasts, on her genital organs, etc., with the object of aiding the magic action of the charm on those parts, and avoiding the loss or lessening of the magic power. This special regimen must be carried through for four consecutive days, at the end of which the effect has already been obtained -- or at least there is no longer the fear that it may pass to some other person.

In general, every man or woman who possesses a charm keeps his body (armpits, breasts, genital organs, etc.) permanently dusted with achiote powder.

The men also make use of the same charms as the women. The magic power of these charms enables them to obtain the wholehearted love of women without their own affections becoming involved.

●89 832 When a young woman reaches the age of puberty, and her first menstrual period arrives, a love charm is hung about her neck during all the time that she is kept indoors and hanging up in her hammock (ritual of initiation of young girls). This charm will give her the quality of being admired and loved by men. The plan in wearing this token is that when she leaves her seclusion she will find the man who will buy her for a wife at a good price. The charm is hung about the adolescent girl's neck by her mother or by a maternal aunt.

[609]

832 When a girl's mother or aunt finds out that she has not been happy in her love life, they obtain charms which will make her more lovable and desirable.

[826] 832 673 Women should be very careful of their hair when it has been cut after the appearance of their first menstruation because if a man gets hold of it he practically becomes the owner of the woman, for by mixing it with hummingbird blood, dog's tail, and achiote he can make a charm which will act directly against the owner of the hair. The man, with the firm intention of causing her harm, may show her the charm or better still may produce it when she has her back to him. [96] The woman because of this simple charm becomes madly enamored with the man

[155 cont.]
182 626 789 individual or of the dead, in the aspect which we have called "Omens and Augural Birds," in the behavior followed by individuals who wish to call up a breeze during a windless calm at sea or to send away eclipses and lightning which, according to their belief, are malevolent.

• • •

789 595 A very interesting aspect of magic is its use for and against some of the cultural institutions and their institutionalized patterns; for example, the use of love charms and the compliance with certain norms after the period of seclusion accompanying the ceremonies at the time of a young woman's initiation. Her aim is to fight against polygamy, with a view either to obtaining predominance over other wives or, better, to prevent the man who has acquired her for his wife from acquiring more women with whom she would have to share his life. Possibly due to the influ- [177] ence of acculturation, there is a tendency toward monogamy on the part of the women. The men, however, tend toward polygamy [654] for prestige, since for it they must have a good economical position, as the price of women is high, increasingly so the greater their social position.

751 771 881 [156] Another institution that we see directly affected by magic is this same initiation of young women. We saw how the death of a first-born child required a series of ceremonies to prevent future children dying at birth, one after the other, and we stated that one of the principal ceremonies consisted in the observance of certain norms which bring to mind very clearly [X] the initiation of the young mother. Their idea would seem to be that one of the causes of the death of the first-born was the deficient carrying out of the magic-biological-social ceremonial to which the girl must submit to prepare for her life as an adult.

764 775 771 626 Also the norms relating to the dead and the belief in a life beyond the grave rest almost exclusively on magic, and through it their prestige and their functioning are kept up. Magic is also the cause of the fear and respect which relatives and friends show to their dead, and it is magic which also promotes all the ceremonial rites that are celebrated in this connection.

5: Simons K-5 (ca. 1882) 1885
SC13 Goajiro SC13

whom to exercise his begging propensities. To mention the dead before the relations is a dreadful offence, often punished by death; for if it happens in the dead person's rancho, with nephew or uncle present, they will assuredly kill the offender on the spot if possible. If not on the spur of the moment, it resolves itself into a heavy fine, usually two or more cows. Even if none of the dead person's relations are present, any friend can carry the news to the relations, and compensation is at once required. When not given it is forcibly taken, probably resented, and the two castes are at war. It is not wise to mention names of any sort in the Goajira in mixed company. 551 628 689

Another peculiar case: if a child dies in the custody of the mother or father, and they are living separate at the time of its death, then tear-money has to be paid by the one, under whose care the child died, to the other. This is "Taguira suchirua tachón," "My tears on account of my child." To demand payment for debts, *achecaha*, is one thing, and to demand compensation, *manga*, is another. They are generally pretty punctual in paying debts; should the debtor die, the creditor is secure, for the relations will suffer anything rather than allow the name of their dead to be abused. The following case of murder I witnessed in Ataipa. Some Pushaimas drinking, one got on to a strange horse, and was ordered off by the owner, on not complying he was shot dead. Both parties being poor and near relations, it was arranged as follows: First payment, eight sheep, two oxen, one horse, two necklaces of cornelian beads, two sirapes of black beads (about 16 lbs.). Six months afterwards, second payment, similar to first. A few months after a third payment is asked, but is more an extra than anything else. After second payment all animosity ceases, and the two families can look again at each other on meeting. Should an Indian in attempting to kill another be wounded or killed, his family demand the same as though no attempt were made. 672 682 [426] [626] [628]

Among domestic customs, the one that calls most attention is shutting up their young girls on arriving at womanhood. The custom is religiously carried out throughout the country. Each girl is confined in a separate little hut by herself. She is stripped of all her ornaments, even to her beads and sirapo, and all her clothing with the exception of the long loose cotton gown, nor is she allowed to cut her hair. For the first couple of days, drinking water is denied her, the only food being *kayaupa*, a composition of medicinal herbs. According to birth, a rigorous diet is observed the first month, no meat being allowed. She can be freely mentioned and is merely alluded to by her relations as "*eartica aura pauru*," "she is shut up in her house." The term of retirement varies according to the wealth and rank of her family. Poor people cannot afford to keep girls idle more than a couple of weeks or a month; whereas the rich enclose them for one, two, or even four years. It is while in this state that she learns all women's requirements— 881 [278] [262] [556] [868]

5: Simons K-5 (ca. 1882) 1[illegible]5
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88 [868] weaving, making dresses, hammocks, sashes, &c., sewing, and all the little knick-knacks Indians love so well.

The confinement is not so isolated as it seems, generally several of her female relations are round the door with the enclosed, who of course becomes rather stout, much blanched, almost white, and some exceedingly beautiful. Strangers and men are not excluded from peeping in through [584] the door, always with an eye to matrimony, and she can be sold and liberated at once, though her husband if rich prefers leaving her to complete her term of schooling. On re-entering to society again, a special festival, *ahuitis*, is held with dancing, &c. An ox is killed, and the girl is dressed in the clothes she has made; her hair is cut and she resumes all her beads, necklaces, bracelets, and other ornaments.

562 [579] Women are much respected by the Goajiros. In a quarrel or drunken brawl, women often save bloodshed by stopping in and tearing the weapons out of their husband's or brother's hand. Travelling with women is consequently perfectly safe, and in case of danger, if one undertakes to protect a stranger, he may rely upon coming out all right.

583 Matrimony is a mere case of barter. The girl is sold for a certain price, fixed by the father. This is paid by the intended husband, and divided by the father, who appropriates the best part for himself and his relations, the rest going to the wife's relations. As it is chiefly in 585 cattle, these are killed and a kind of bridal festival held. There is no other ceremony. A wife is under obligation to support her husband, 593 find him in food, clothes, &c. She does most of the trading, and a [462] contract made with an Indian is worthless, should his better half object. An Indian cannot inflict bodily injury on his wife, for he becomes liable [583] to her relations, and should she die during childbirth he has to repay the father what he gave for her. But if the wife is untrue (a rare occur- [694] rence) he demands from the father the price he paid for her, who if he cannot refund, helps him to recover from the seducer, plus tear or compensation from his mother-in-law. At the husband's death, the 587 wife becomes a legacy to his brother, usually the youngest; if there are 764 none, then his nephew inherits her. The daughter of a chief is worth, 583 according to his wealth and power (i. e. the number of men he can dispose of in a fight) from 6 to 150 head of cattle (12*l.* to 300*l.*).

764 When a person dies, a grand drinking festival is given, that lasts as long as there is anything to drink—days, and even weeks, with the wealthy. These latter are buried twice, and have two festivals. A rich person is always buried in the rancho, and on the spot where he was born; being often carried for that purpose immense distances. A fire is lighted every night from sunset to sunrise in front of the grave, for the sole use of the dead. Immense piles of wood are gathered for this purpose, as the body is kept two years in the house. Then all the relations can meet on a certain day, and the second feast takes place, when the bones are carefully gathered, placed in a jar, and consigned to the

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until they reached marriageable age. Even when they were little they wore belts of seed pearls which were added to with the years, and other strings of beads were put round their shoulders and across their chests. A girl of eight or ten might carry fifteen or twenty pounds weight of beads and pearls. The string round the waist was made of black beads, but those on the upper part of the body had to be of different colours.

The rich used gold and coral. Necklaces of gold beads were traditional, but every other bead had to be black and be either a seed-pearl or of glass. Poor girls used plaits of cotton threads on their torsos instead of strings of beads. All who could, wore sandals with pompoms to protect their feet against the thorns on the ground.

Women slaves and slave-workers were often not given protective tunics by their masters and therefore went about perpetually half-naked. Being unable to protect themselves from the sun, they become darker skinned than the others.

The women's dress was thus colourless—unless they had bought some coloured cloth from a white trader. To make up for this, they painted their faces with patterns, mostly using the violet dye of a fruit called *genipa*. The men painted themselves too, but restricted this to a few lines. Only the women took real pains about painting themselves. It was mainly their faces they painted, but on occasion their arms and legs could also be covered with patterns. When on a journey, the women painted their noses and cheeks all over with black or red paint. This was not done for the sake of appearance, but to protect themselves against sunburn. We tried the method ourselves and found it excellent. If one did not follow the Indians' example there, one easily got badly burned. The Indians regard this protective effect as supernatural—all paint is magical and the pattern has secret significance. The women showed my wife red and brown powders that they had and advised her to try them.

All at once the women were in a hurry. They had remembered that the men were due and hastened to the fires and their pots. We roamed around and came across a small hut, entirely closed, standing just behind the big houses.

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●88 Francisco whispered to me that there was a girl in there. She had been shut up ever since the first signs of womanhood had appeared and would stay there a long time, emerging in due course pale and beautiful. While shut up she was called *majayura*.

The girl was not supposed to show herself to outsiders, but we dangled knives and glass beads and she was allowed out to be photographed. As long as a girl is confined, her family may not see her. She is guarded by an old woman, a near relative, and it was she we bribed—to let us take the picture.

When a girl first menstruates, she at once tells her mother or other close female relative. She is then given an emetic so that she rids herself of any food she ate before she became a woman. The implication being, one imagines, that she also rids herself of all childish ideas, vomiting them up. Then her hair is cut off, and she is rolled naked in a tunic and laid in a hammock that is hoisted up to the roof at the back of the hut. There she must lie, fasting, for three or four days, while an elderly woman relative keeps watch over her. [832] Often an amulet that will make men like her is placed beside her in the hammock. She has to lie motionless and neither scratch nor spit; these could have a deleterious effect.

News of the event has now gone out to relations and others, and everyone turns up wearing their finery, painted and ornamented. Cattle are butchered and they dance the so-called *chichamaya*. Sometimes there are horse-races as well. After some days the girl is allowed to leave her ham- [297] mock and is washed with water that has been put out in the dew, which is considered to give a light complexion. She may now begin eating small quantities of maize gruel and other prescribed foods. Then she is shut up in the little hut or in a separate part of the larger dwelling-house, but at all events hidden from the world. Not infrequently the little hut is built as part of the greater.

[832] The girl's guardian sees that she drinks certain decoctions of herbs intended to develop her physically, so that she is to the taste of Guajiro men.

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How must a girl look to find favour with them? She must be tall, broad-hipped and have firm prominent breasts and well-rounded curves. Flabbiness the men do not like, but they do not seem to worry about the shape of their women's legs. These, of course, are hidden beneath the wide tunic, but the wind sweeps this against them, outlining them. It is fortunate for the Guajiro women that their men do not attach importance to the shape of their legs, for they are seldom lovely. To our eyes they seem too short and badly shaped. The men attach much importance to gentle, dignified behaviour. The Guajiro girl should have large eyes and good teeth, but the most important thing of all is that she should be light-skinned; that is the hall-mark of gentility. No girl ever neglects her beauty decoctions, not even when she is in the charge of the nuns at the mission station and thus not isolated as the rule is at home. The rules she has to observe and the medicines she must take are of importance not only for her appearance, but also for her physique. If she follows her instructions, she will give birth without difficulty and there will be no risk of the baby being stillborn. Her mother and her family are held to be partially responsible if the first-born dies in or after birth, for that means that on some point the complicated rules governing the girl's period of incarceration have been neglected.

A girl is by no means idle while she is shut up; quite the contrary. She spins and weaves industriously, under supervision of the old woman, and learns the details of housekeeping and how to prepare different foods. Actually she will know most of this already, having taken a more or less active part in the work of the household ever since she was able to walk. She also receives instruction in how to behave, is initiated into the duties incumbent upon a housewife, what she must do as spouse and mother, in the various aspects of married life and in the mysteries of sex.

No man is allowed to enter the girl's little hut, and she is not allowed to meet men, receive visitors or be with her family, if visitors come. When the guardian considers that the girl can be let out, usually after a year or two—the news spreads quickly and guests start to come with or without

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881 invitation. Again cattle are butchered, and there is drinking
584 and dancing and horse-racing. Numbers of men come to see if they would like to put themselves forward as suitors. The more eminent guests are received in the house itself, and the girl is now present. Her shorn hair has grown and been trimmed to a page-boy cut, and she wears her best clothes
[754 and new ornaments. She hides her hair clippings carefully
826] in a bag, for she does not want to risk anyone getting hold of them and using them to acquire power over her by the arts of magic. Later, she will secretly bury them under a
[789 cow pat. That will help to increase her herds. The droppings
514] of various animals play a great part in the magic of the Guajiro, and it would seem that there is negro influence here as well.

881 The girl has now been born again—she is a new person, a woman. She knows all that an adult woman needs to know and can do everything that a wife and mother should be able to do. Pale and lovely, she steps out into life once more and inquisitive young men swarm round her. The rich give a big feast, the poor provide simpler fare, but it is always a great occasion.

[582] A Guajiro man will never marry a girl before she has undergone this period of confinement, which means that people seldom marry too early. It is said that in the old days
[595 rich old men with several wives sometimes bought little
831] poor girls as concubines, believing that that would enhance their virility.

The girl's long segregation is intended to protect her from the supernatural dangers that are thought to threaten her, especially during this sensitive period of transition from childhood to womanhood. The girl can also be dangerous to others through being exposed to attack by spirits. It is only practical that during this period she should practise handicrafts.

252 Going back to the house, we found the women at the
[354] fires, which there were protected by special small cactus screens. There was no need to have them under a roof at that time of the year, only to shelter them from the wind. The pots stood over the fire supported on three stones.

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585 Mauana said that while she is in confinement a girl will have been taught, among other things, the attentions cus- [581] tom requires her to show her husband.

When he arrives home, she hastens to hang up his ham- 583 mock and offer him something to drink. She at once prepares a meal, if one is not yet ready. The master of the house has [264] his own crockery, from which he alone eats, and his wife must see that he has his favourite dishes and that they are properly cooked. If he has returned from a journey or from hunting, she must see that he has water to wash in and a clean guayuco. Once he has taken his place in the hammock, she sits on the ground and tells him the day's events. If he falls asleep, she sits in silence.

When the husband's friends or other people come to see [574] him, the wife's place is again on the ground beside his hammock. She does not butt in upon the men's conversation, but knows how to be amusing if she is spoken to. She must see that each guest has a hammock to rest in and offer everyone refreshments. Men are proud to have such a hostess for a wife.

[574] In the husband's absence a wife must receive visitors courteously, but observe caution, if they are men. She will hang a hammock under a roofed shelter close to the house, but will not let the visitor inside. She will then offer him refreshments and sit down beside his hammock with some handwork.

It goes without saying that she must take good care of her husband's belongings and property, for he is often forced to be away with his herds. She must also take care of her [273] husband himself, when he is drunk, as he not infrequently is. When fights occur at feasts, the women, as we know, [574] throw themselves between the men to avoid bloodshed. A wife is responsible for her husband, when he is drunk. If she has not bothered to keep an eye on him and he is beaten or killed, the fault is hers. Or he may take his own life [762] while intoxicated—suicide for mere trifles is not unusual—and then too she can be held responsible, if she has not intervened. If he hurts her or destroys any of her things while he is drunk, she knows that he will make rich amends

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later, for he has been brought up always to try and make things right.

During her period of isolation a girl also learns how to satisfy her husband erotically and always to be ready, when he is excited. To retain his love she may employ magic as well as her own natural powers of attraction. Knowing that a woman loses some of her looks and attraction during pregnancy, wives often try, after having had several children, to hinder fertilization by taking certain herbal drugs and by magical means.

'Polygamy is permitted, is it not, Mauana?'

'Yes, a man can take several wives. As long as he pays the bride-price, no one can say anything, but her family would never allow a better-class girl to become the second wife of anyone. And you see, custom decrees that a Guajiro wife, whether the first or a concubine, must acquiesce if the husband takes a new wife. Similarly, it is considered that wives ought to live in peace and friendship. They must receive a new concubine cordially and all show their best side to the husband. They must help each other to watch the children and not display jealousy if the husband prefers one to the others.

'That is how it should be, but the reality is quite different. Very often the wives live in the same house, which naturally leads to conflict more easily than when each has her own hut. Jealousy or envy are common in these harems. Enmity and quarrelling are not infrequent, nor is actual fighting. The wives spy upon each other, destroy each other's things and make all sorts of scenes. One or other perhaps comes to hate the husband. It is said that a certain man, who shall be nameless, had noticed something of the sort and did not dare to be at home while a family feud lasted. An enemy could have bribed one of his wives to put poison in his maize beer.'

'That does not sound pleasant!'

'No, polygamy undoubtedly has its drawbacks!' Mauana agreed. 'I myself have only one wife, but several bed slaves,' he added with an artful look in his eye.

Even though all a man's marriages are considered legal,

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the chief game. The *Goajiro* who live near the coast sometimes catch fish (with hook and line), lobsters, mollusks, and crabs.

Cattle raising.—The *Goajiro* are primarily nomadic cattle raisers and, consequently, depend upon the water supply. In the rainy season they seek natural depressions, which they sometimes enlarge artificially, where the water may gather. In case of drought they wander toward the sea, where wells 30 to 40 feet (9 to 12 m.) deep are dug.

Besides cattle the *Goajiro* keep sheep, goats, horses (pl. 72, *bottom, left*), mules, pigs, and domestic fowls, which they take with them wherever they go. An estimate gives them 100,000 cattle, 200,000 sheep and goats, 20,000 horses and mules, and 30,000 donkeys. As cattle are a measure of wealth, the Indians are reluctant to kill them for food, but they utilize the milk or export the animals to Curaçao and Aruba in exchange for textiles and corn. Each tribe has its own cattle brand, and the annual round-up and branding is an occasion for great festivities. Horse races and other sports take place, and large quantities of food and drink are consumed.

Food preparation.—*Goajiro* diet consists almost entirely of meat and milk products. Goats and sheep are killed every day or two for meat, and the milk of the cows is made into butter and cheese. This diet is supplemented by yuca, cactus fruit, sugar, rice, and plantains, the last three obtained from Colombian and Venezuelan traders in exchange for skins. Meat that is not immediately consumed is suspended from tall poles, and skins are pegged to the ground and salted in preparation for sale. Butter is made by stirring the cream with a fluted stick in a calabash or wooden bucket. To make cheese, rennet is added to skimmed milk in a trough, and the curds are put in a primitive wooden cheese press, which is weighted with a heavy rock.

HOUSES AND VILLAGES

Although the *Goajiro* are of a common origin, they are divided into sibs ("castes" or "tribes"), each living within a rather limited area (Simons, 1885, p. 796). The sibs are split into local groups, which occupy extended villages or rancherías, each with 2 to 50 houses (ranchos) and 10 to 250 or more Indians. Houses are always within gunshot distance of one another and so disposed that surprise attacks would be difficult. If a village is at all permanent, a protective cactus hedge surrounds it.

Goajiro nomadism makes elaborate houses unnecessary. Dwellings are mere lean-tos, arbors, and temporary gabled roofs supported on poles. Thatch is made from the core of the cactus, split lengthwise. Rough tables, chairs with rawhide seats, and benches are often used. The hammock is always present. House walls are often lacking, but a corner of the hut may be closed off for a girl's puberty seclusion. When mi-

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When migrating from one locality to another the *Goajiro* generally dismantle their houses and take them along, piling the poles and thatch on the backs of burros. Sometimes, however, they leave them for their own or someone else's use in the future.

DRESS AND ADORNMENT

Goajiro dress has changed little since the time of Nicolás de la Rosa (18th century). Men normally wear only a breechcloth, a necklace, and a head band with feather attached (pl. 72, *top*); but when traveling, paying visits, or receiving company they wear a large loincloth with many folds, a mantle (nowadays of bright colors), and an immense sash, in which they carry their arrows. A knitted string bag is hung from the waistband. In towns trousers and shirts are worn. The women wear a cotton dress, sometimes made like a simple sack with holes cut for the head and arms. The puna—long strings of beads passing over both shoulders, crossing each other on the breast and back and held in place by a sash or belt of beads (the sirapo)—is placed on a female child a few months after birth and gradually augmented according to the parents' wealth and the child's age. Black beads are generally used for the sirapo, colored ones for the puna. A married woman wears the puna until her first confinement. After her seclusion at puberty, a robe, sometimes containing 8 or 10 yards of embroidered material, is also worn by a *Goajiro* woman, but the loosely folded cloth which was her sole covering before puberty is still worn beneath it. Women, unlike men, are modest and avoid being seen naked.

Some young girls have as many as 100 turns of beads around their waists, as well as many around their wrists and ankles. Red coral is preferred, but most beads are made from seeds or coconut shell and are cut out by means of a hollow metal reamer twirled rapidly between the palms. The perforated shell may then be used as a colander. Glass and porcelain beads and earrings are also worn. The most prized ornaments are the tumas—polished and perforated stone ornaments found in some of the old graves. On dress occasions necklaces of beads and gold ornaments are worn. These, found in *Tairona* graves, are fashioned in the form of tiny animals, frogs, turtles, etc.

The men, except the medicine men, wear their hair short, kept back by a ring or crown made of plaited straw, or of wool with a tassel behind. Often the two are combined and adorned with a couple of feathers in front; or the whole may be made of feathers. For protection against mosquitos and sun both sexes paint their skin with powders made from rotten wood, a black stain made from a wild nut, and another color extracted from leaves and mixed with fat. After puberty women cut their hair short, keeping the shorn tresses in a bag hung from the roof; henceforth they never let it grow beyond the neck. They make designs on

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726 on equal terms. He then approached the enemy from the left while making quick movements, jumps, and turns, with his legs apart and his knees bent. More recently, according to Ernst (1887 c), war is not declared, attempts being made to take the enemy by surprise.

[547] Wars last indefinitely, sometimes being broken by a peace brought about by an influential "civilizado" or the Capuchin monks, the latter
579 sometimes paying the retribution demanded out of their own pockets. Some tribes, such as the *Cosina* of Serrania Cosina (actually a conglomeration of outcastes rather than a sib), make their living almost entirely by robbery and pillage, destroying houses, stealing cattle, and killing or enslaving their enemies.

LIFE CYCLE

843 **Birth and childhood.**—During pregnancy a woman continues to do her heavy work up to the very hour of delivery. At childbirth, the shaman
844 pronounces various spells over the patient and applies poultices made of
[158] dried flowers, roots, etc. A large, heavy stone placed over the womb and vigorous massaging bring about the birth. If the placenta is not soon expelled, the woman drinks a medicine concocted by the medicine man. As soon as the child is safely delivered the father serves rum and chicha
[848] to all his relatives. If the pains of childbirth appear when the sib is on the march, the woman mounts and rides ahead so that when the sib catches up the event is practically over. The husband cuts the cord with his machete and cauterizes its ends with a glowing ember. The woman
[159] then continues on the march with the child in a sling on her back. When the permanent camp is reached she washes herself and the child.

85 Baptism is a Christian ceremony which the *Goajiro* have adopted, and
55 most of the Indians are called by Spanish names, as their real names may
177 not be mentioned. Teknonymy is practiced; a parent is addressed by its child's name plus a prefix, *nushi* or *wushi* for the father, *ai* or *ei* for the mother. Thus, a father may be called Nushijuan after a son or Wushijuana after a daughter.

857 At 6 or 7, girls learn to grind salt, pick cotton, and tend the smaller
864 animals; the boys imitate their fathers.

865 Parents are said to show little affection for their children, sometimes
[315] selling them at Sinamaica. They receive $10 or $15 for a child of 8 or 9 years. The purchaser becomes the child's guardian, teaches him the Catholic faith, and keeps him until he is 17 years old. These children
[316] rarely return home. Abandoned children are taken to the San Antonio
79 orphanage, where the girls continue to wear their *Goajiro* dress, but the boys are put into jackets and pants.

881 **Girls' puberty.**—At her first menstruation a girl is isolated in a small dark hut and stripped of all her ornaments. She lies in a hammock, sometimes hoisted near the roof. For the first 2 days she drinks no

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water but is given an herbal purgative. Her hair is cut short. Generally several of her relatives stay around the door of the hut, and strangers and men with an eye to matrimony may look in. During this period the girl is taught the duties of married life and such skills as weaving, sewing, and making hammocks. When she emerges, stout and bleached, a special festival is held, when she resumes her ornaments and puts on the adult clothes that she has made during her confinement. She is now considered marriageable. The length of her confinement depends on her status, though theoretically it lasts until her hair again reaches the nape of her neck. Poor girls are secluded only a few weeks, rich girls up to 2 years.

Sexual life and marriage.—Little is known about the sexual life of the *Goajiro*. A certain amount of promiscuous love making occurs among the young people at the biweekly festivals. Dances also provide an opportunity for sexual advances.

There are some male transvestites who carry on only female activities and are ridiculed by the men.

When a man desires to marry he sends his father or uncle as intermediary, then pays a bride price which has been set by the girl's relatives. The payment is usually in cattle, but goats, pearls, liquor, cotton cloth, and gold ornaments also are used. The father retains the purchase price only when his first daughter marries; the income of subsequent marriages goes to the girl's senior maternal uncles. The mother also receives part of the income. A son obtains the cattle for the bride payment from the increase of his father's herds.

Intermarriage between the sibs is frequent, and many of the *Goajiro* give their daughters to "civilizados" from Maracaibo and Río Hacha, who pay higher prices and find such a tie with the Indians useful in their trading relations.

The marriage ceremony consists of a series of feasts and exchanges of presents between the two families. The wedding night is spent at the rancheria of the bride's mother, but the nuptial hammock (specially woven by the female relatives of the bride) is hung from a tree some distance away from the house. For a period of days and even months the bridegroom leaves his bride at dawn and returns only after sunset. In this way the groom shows respect to his mother-in-law.

Polygyny is general. The number of wives depends on the economic status of the husband, some men having as many as 20. Each wife lives in her own house, where her husband occasionally visits her. The man, as head of the polygynous household, supervises the daily slaughter of animals and the distribution of meat and corn to each household according to the number of its members.

If a wife shirks her domestic duties she may be divorced and her husband may claim the return of the bride price cattle, plus their increase and